

The Ocean Foundation  
RE: Intersessional Facilitators Report on Underwater Cultural Heritage  
12 July 2023

Thank you Madam Facilitator.

As it is my first time taking the floor during this session, The Ocean Foundation would like to offer our thanks to you, Madam Facilitator for your leadership during this working group, and to our host country Jamaica and the ISA Secretariat for their kind hospitality.

This intervention is on behalf of The Ocean Foundation, the Deep Sea Conservation Coalition, Oceans North, and the Pew Charitable Trusts.

We are incredibly grateful for the intersessional work led by the Federated States of Micronesia and wish to affirm our thanks and support for both the work that has been done and that more discussions on Underwater Cultural Heritage may offer continuing clarity.

We support the findings of the intersessional working group's definition of a new phrase "Object or Site of an Archaeological or Historical Nature" and recognize the need to include the phrase throughout the text as relevant or to include such phrasing within the definition of the marine environment.

On intangible cultural heritage, we sincerely appreciate the conversation during the intersessional working group and affirm that it is key to include mention of intangible cultural heritage in the draft text. Doing so will ensure space for the protection of all cultural heritage and interests, including indigenous culture rights and interests, and free and prior informed consent.

Mentions and acknowledgment of Underwater Cultural Heritage in these regulatory texts can ensure the protection of our collective human history now and into the future. We encourage working further to incorporate this phrase as relevant into the regulations.